

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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-----112407 180653Z /15

R 161204Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1214
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 4030

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, EAID, JM, US
SUBJECT: SEAGA ASSERTS ASSISTANCE KEEPING MANLEY IN POWER

1. OPPOSITION LEADER EDWARD SEAGA SENT HIS POLITICAL
CONFIDANT, SENATOR RONALD IRVINE, TO SEE ME WITH A
MESSAGE THIS MORNING (MAY 15). IRVINE SAID THAT SEAGA
WAS URGING THAT MAJOR BILATERAL AID DONORS TEMPORARILY
SUSPEND THEIR ASSISTANCE TO JAMAICA. IRVINE WENT ON TO
SAY THAT CONTINUED PROVISION OF AID WOULD NOT BE USED
EFFECTIVELY AS LONG AS MICHAEL MANLEY REMAINS IN OFFICE
BUT WOULD HAVE THE SOLE RESULT OF "PROPPING UP" THE
PRIME MINISTER. WHAT JAMAICA NEEDS NOW, SAID IRVINE
ON SEAGA'S BEHALF, IS THE REMOVAL OF MICHAEL MANLEY.
ONLY THEN CAN ANY KIND OF CREDIBILITY BE RESTORED TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA. (IRVINE SUBSEQUENTLY
SAID THAT HE HAD ALREADY MADE SEAGA'S VIEWS
KNOWN TO THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER.)

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2. I REMINDED IRVINE THAT AMERICAN POLICY IS NOT
DIRECTED TOWARD SHORING UP MICHAEL MANLEY BUT
TOWARD AIDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAMAICA. OUR
AIM IS TO ASSIST THE JAMAICAN PEOPLE AND IN SO
DOING, TO STRENGTHEN THE CLIMATE FOR DEMOCRATIC
INSTITUTIONS AND THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS.
OUR GOAL IS THE SURVIVAL OF JAMAICA, AND WE WOULD

PURSUE THIS WHETHER THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) OR THE JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP) WERE IN POWER.

3. I THEN ADDED THAT IN THE PRESENT SETTING, OUR ASSISTANCE MAY HAVE THE DERIVATIVE EFFECT OF STRENGTHENING THE RULING PARTY. HOWEVER, TO THE DEGREE THAT IT DOES, IT SERVES TO STRENGTHEN THE MODERATE FACTION AND TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO RESIST PRESSURES FROM WITHIN THE RULING PARTY TO SEEK SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS ON THE AUTHORITARIAN LEFT. IRVINE REPLIED THAT STRENGTHENING THE MODERATES WILL NOT CURE JAMAICA'S MOST PRESSING PROBLEM -- THE CONTINUANCE IN POWER OF MANLEY. THE MODERATES WILL NOT GAIN ADEQUATE CONFIDENCE TO CHALLENGE MANLEY FOR THEY FEAR HE WILL CALL AN ELECTION IN WHICH THEY WILL BE DRIVEN FROM OFFICE. (THE SENATOR ADDED THAT IF SUCH AN ELECTION IS HELD, THE JLP WILL ABANDON ITS DECISION TO BOYCOTT ELECTIONS.)

4. AS THE MEETING DREW TO A CLOSE, I RESTATED OUR POSITION. I SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT INTERFERE IN THE AFFAIRS OF JAMAICA. WE WILL NOT BE MANIPULATIVE. WE WILL NOT UNDERTAKE ANY ACTIONS WHICH WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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JAMAICAN PEOPLE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN SOME ALLEGED SHORT-TERM POLITICAL END. AT THIS POINT, IRVINE APPEARED PERSUADED, AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT TO PLAY ANY OTHER ROLE WOULD BE WRONG. HIS UNDERSTANDING WAS SUMMED UP IN A FINAL THOUGHT. AS IRVINE PUT IT, IF THE UNITED STATES COULD WORK TO UNDERMINE A PNP GOVERNMENT, EQUALLY IT COULD WORK TO UNDERMINE A JLP GOVERNMENT. IRVING

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